

CENSUS 2020

COVID Virtual Outreach Toolkit



This Census 2020 COVID Virtual Outreach Toolkit is designed to support Cook County's grantees, champions and stakeholders so they can continue their outreach efforts when in-person outreach isn't a viable option.



    @CookCountyGov #CookCountyCensus

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 COOK COUNTY COVID-19 CENSUS
OUTREACH STRATEGIES**

- 4 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE**

- 7 A GUIDE FOR DEVELOPING
AUTHENTIC INFLUENCERS**

- 10 COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TIPS**

- 10 PARTICIPATE IN COOK COUNTY
CENSUS THUNDERCLAPS**

COVID-19 CENSUS OUTREACH STRATEGIES

COVID-19 has presented those doing Census Outreach with enormous challenges. Cook County grantees have modified their project plans to adapt to the pandemic.

Here are some more ideas we've gathered that may help grantees, Census Champions, and other stakeholders. Consider these strategies when performing outreach initiatives in a socially distant world. .



Ride Around

Several Cook County Census grantees have “mobile RVs” or digital trucks that can be rented and driven around town promoting the Census. Or, if you want to do-it-yourself, you can outfit a car or truck with Census stickers, and use a microphone or loudspeaker to inform people sheltered-at-home about the Census.



Creative Outdoor Advertising

Do you have access to a marquee? Maybe your community center, school, or place of worship has outdoor signage. If so, consider posting a call to action for people to fill out the Census. An example would be “FILL OUT THE CENSUS 2020CENSUS.GOV”.



Grocery and To-Go Advertising

Grocery stores are booming. Carry-out and delivery is experiencing a lot of traffic right now. Consider engaging local stores, restaurants, and other businesses that are open. Think about ways to best engage their customers. For example, would it be possible to include a Census leaflet in their carry-out bag, or including a Census message on napkins or menus?



Find Out Who's Communicating

Churches are hosting virtual services and sending out regular communications. Early learning centers are in constant dialogue with parents on a daily basis. Discover more about the existing conversations that are taking place in your community, then join ! Find out how potential partner organizations are communicating and see how you can plug Census messaging into their existing communications.



No-Touch Flyering

Leaving flyers on gates, at doorways, on car windows, and at open businesses can be a great way to put your message in the hands and the minds of your audience of focus. While we have to be careful about being safe and paying attention to COVID-19 restrictions, consider leaving flyers in strategic locations where people are still gathering in low-response communities.



Niche Advertising

Utilizing small newspapers, radio stations, or social media sites -- especially those that cater to our hard-to-count residents -- is a great way to inform people about the Census. Cook County residents are keeping a closer eye on these alternative publications these days.



Phone Banking and Print Mailers

Call your lists of constituents (making sure to indicate who you are and that you don't work for the Census) or mailing info from your organization with Census reminders. Keep your constituents informed and help deliver more federal funding into your community by achieving a complete count.

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

As a 2020 Census partner, you can help ensure that the people in your community are accurately counted and represented. As marketing campaigns shift toward a focus on digital platforms in response to stay at home orders brought about by COVID-19, it's important to utilize social media to its full potential.

In this Social Media Tool Kit, you'll find essential information on how to use social media for your organization's Census campaign. By using the best practices shared in this guide, you'll help ensure that every person in your community is counted.

Why Social Media Is Important

- Social media enables organizations to create engagement, build relationships, and gain trust.
- Organizations have the ability to target specific audiences for a more effective marketing campaign. You can target by gender, zip code, age, and interests.
- Social Media allows you to expand your audience reach, through sharable content which builds brand awareness, recognition and can drive traffic back to your organization.

Just getting started? We can help.

Where Are You Now?

To conduct an effective social media campaign, your organization needs to first assess its current presence on all social platforms. To get started, note these key things:

- What social networks are you currently active on?
- What is your following on these networks?
- Who are your followers?
- Are you consistently engaging with your audience?

You Can Develop A Better Idea Of Where You Want To Be, If You Understand Where You Currently Are.

As a Census Partner, Your Organization Already Has Two Objectives:

1. Encourage the members of your communities to fill out the census
2. Educate the members of your communities on the census

What do you want to get out of your social media platform? Why are you doing it? Are you trying to have higher enrollment numbers? Are you trying to keep Cook County residents informed? Do you want to build relationships with community members and boost their civic involvement? Your answers to these questions should affect the type of content you post.



1 Understand Your Current Audience

Who follows you? Parents? Other education sites? Who are you trying to engage moving forward? What are their problems and/or needs? You can make a few assumptions to get started, but over time you'll want to craft a well-researched profile.

Monitor their engagement on your page

Compare different kinds of content you post, do they like and comment on one type more than others?

Ask them

Making a text-based post or poll that asks your audience what they would like to see.

2 Engage With Other People

You can post content every day, but if you don't interact with your followers, it will be a struggle to grow your account. Engaging with your audience can take a lot of forms, but here are 2 easy ways to do it.

Comment on other posts

By commenting on other people's content, you'll take advantage of someone else's audience. Head over to similar accounts and converse on their posts. Make sure your comments are insightful and helpful.

Participate in groups

Facebook has tons of groups (some public, others invite-only) created around countless topics. Join other groups (as your brand page). Post your content and reply to others. Be genuine, helpful, and add value.

3 Use Strategic Hashtags

A hashtag is a word or phrase that categorizes content around the keyword used in the hashtag. An example of this is #2020Census would show results for posts pertaining to the 2020 Census. People who are interested in certain content can click the hashtag or search for it to see all posts that include that hashtag.

They expand your influence outside of your current audience. Users do not have to be your followers already to see your posts with hashtags. It's a highly targeted method of reaching new people who already share common interests. You know someone is interested in Census resources when they've searched for "#CensusFacts."

Stick to one or two hashtags per post on Twitter. You can use up to 30 on Instagram, but add a few return lines after your caption so that they don't clutter or take away from the actual post.

Use the hashtag #CookCountyCensus to bring added visibility to your posts!

4 Post Consistently

One of the most important rules for growing a social media account is a consistent posting schedule. Your audience will grow to expect your content. A recommended amount of posts is 2-3 times a week.

If something worked well on social media, post it again! Just do it in new ways. See example below about sharing an article about the Cook County Census:

- **1st share:** Title of article + link
- **2nd share:** Quote from the same article + link
- **3rd share:** The main point from the article + link
- **4th share:** Change the graphic + link
- **5th share:** Ask a question + link



5 Share More Video

Video is the most engaging content type on every social media platform. So, it's always a good idea to create at least some form of video content to maximize engagement on your page.

Lots of views can lead to increased reach, engagement, and exposure for your organization.

6 Change Your Profile Photo And Cover Photos

Change your Page profile photos and cover photos - Your profile photos and banners will be some of your most-viewed content. Use these tools to showcase all of your great work and the stories of those who benefit from your services.

On Facebook, consider changing your cover photo at least once per month and profile photo at minimum once every 6 months.

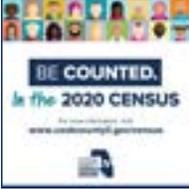
HOW TO CREATE ENGAGING CONTENT

On most social media platforms, you have approximately 5 seconds to make an impact on a user before they keep scrolling. On others, you have as little as 3 seconds.

So, how do you keep your followers from scrolling past your post?

- 1. Choose images that are clean** - A clean image is easy on the eye, clear to the viewer, and something your viewer can comprehend in a quick glance (or 3 seconds).
- 2. Use a good caption** - Keep captions concise, easy to read, and relevant to the visual that the viewer is looking at. Spaces and emojis are a great way to separate ideas and keep the text looking fresh, not overwhelming text to the reader.
- 3. User-Generated Content** - Sometimes, the best content comes from other social profiles. An example of this would be to ask your followers to use the hashtag “I Count,” on their photos, then choose the best ones to repost to your feed or story.

The table below provides 3 sample assets for your social media accounts

		IMAGE
<p>We are excited to announce that we've partnered with the @usCensusbureau to support the #2020Census!</p> <p>As a partner, we'll be working to ensure that our community is accurately represented.</p> <p>To learn about the upcoming Census, visit www.2020Census.gov.</p>	<p>We are excited to announce that we've partnered with the @usCensusbureau to support the #2020Census! To learn about the Census, how the data collected will be used, and what to expect next, visit 2020Census.gov.</p>	
<p>For the first time, in 2020 the U.S. Census Bureau will accept responses online.</p> <p>The process will be quick and secure. You can respond to the Census in less time than it takes to finish your morning coffee. You'll still be able to respond by mail.</p> <p>To learn more about what to expect, visit 2020Census.gov. #2020Census</p>	<p>For the first time, you can respond to the Census online. Responding by mail will still be an option. Get more information: 2020Census.gov. #2020Census</p>	
<p>Los próximos 10 años dependen de sus próximos 10 minutos. El censo exige poco esfuerzo, pero tiene grandes consecuencias. Respondiendo solo diez preguntas puede ayudar a traer una década de fondos para su comunidad.</p>	<p>Los próximos 10 años dependen de sus próximos 10 minutos. El #censo exige poco esfuerzo, pero tiene grandes consecuencias. Respondiendo solo diez preguntas puede ayudar a traer una década de fondos para su comunidad.</p>	

The table below provides image dimensions for Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

		
<p>Banner 1920 x 1080 Pixels</p> <p>Profile Picture 180 x 180 Pixels</p>	<p>Square 1080 pixels x 1080 pixels</p> <p>Vertical 1080 pixels x 1350 pixels</p> <p>Horizontal 1080 pixels x 566 pixels</p> <p>Stories 1080 pixels by 1920 pixels or 9:16 Aspect Ratio</p>	<p>Header 1500 pixels x 500 pixel</p> <p>Profile Photo: 400 pixels x 400 pixels</p> <p>Shared Images: 440 pixels x 220 pixels (minimum) 1024 pixels x 512 pixels (maximum)</p>

PAID ADVERTISING

Creating a Boosted Post on Facebook

Go to your Facebook Page.

1. Find the post you want to boost.
2. Select Boost Post. You can find it in the bottom-right corner of your post.
3. Fill in the details for your ad. You can choose the following details:
 - **Audience:** Choose a recommended audience or create a new audience based on specific traits.
 - **Budget:** Select a recommended budget or provide a custom budget.
 - **Duration:** Select one of the suggested time frames or provide a specific end date.
 - **Payment Method:** Review your payment method.
4. Select “Boost”

Promotions on Instagram

1. Click the “Promote” icon at the bottom of the post you wish to promote
2. Determine your objective- Before you boost your post, Instagram will ask you whether you want to attract more profile visits, website traffic, or promotion views.
3. Fill in the details
 - **Choose an Audience** - You can pick from three different targeting options: Automatic, Local, and Manual. Automatic tells Instagram to target people who are just like your followers, Local lets you target people in a specific location, and Manual lets you target specific people, places, or interests.
 - **Set your Budget and Duration** - Instagram will estimate the expected reach and clicks that your post will attract after you set your post’s budget and ad duration.
4. Click “Promote”

A GUIDE TO DEVELOPING AUTHENTIC INFLUENCERS

Collaborate with the members of the communities you serve to develop genuine interest among the local audience you aim to connect with.

Chances are, your audience of focus doesn't need a celebrity to help motivate people to act. Real change happens when real people inspire others to take real action. If your organization desires to bring true change to your community, then how better to connect with the members of your community than by connecting with influential people within the communities you serve. Partner with people whose voice is respected and who holds influence. This authentic influencer can be a person like a Pastor, Principle, or even a younger person who wields their influence on social media.

Developing Authentic Influencers and Social Ambassadors for Your Organization

How to Make Social Media Ambassadors

1. Find community members or constituents to champion your cause.
 - Find influential people within your community who publicly align their “personal brand” with the values and vision of your initiative. For example, if there’s a parent in your community who’s passionate about education, partner with them to share content about ways that the Census helps improve funding for public schools in their community.
2. Get them engaged. Create weekly assignments for them to engage with your brand.
3. Create a guide for their posts. At the end of the day, they’re helping you. Make things as easy for your ambassadors as possible to post your message on their platform.
 - In scenarios where they’re creating content for you give them a prompt and context for the content they create.
 - You can also provide them with done-for-you content for them to post with a time to post and guidance for captions.
4. Give them strategic hashtags to use to enhance the visibility of their efforts.
 - A Great Example of a Hashtag is #CookCountyCensus
 - A Good Example of a Hashtag is #2020Census
 - A Bad Example of a Hashtag is #Chicago because it gets overused and is too broad. An improved hashtag instead to consider would be more specific to your audience’s interest like “#ChicagoNonProfit”



COLLABORATE WITH THE COMMUNITY

Tap into your community and become a Census Champion!

Reach out to PPE distributions sites, food pantries, and community outreach support sites to participate in existing initiatives.

Want to organize Census outreach at a PPE distribution site?

Get involved and lead a distribution site.

Here are 4 Steps to making a big difference in your community:

1. Get Cook County Census branded materials at https://www.cookcountyil.gov/sites/default/files/census_toolkit_ii.pdf
2. Purchase flyers
3. Partner with local churches, places of worship, or community organizations to see how they can you can support your outreach efforts.
4. Make sure everyone performing outreach is following CDC safety measures.

PARTICIPATE IN COOK COUNTY CENSUS THUNDERCLAPS

The objective of this social media activation is to carry out a mass coordinated outreach effort between the State of Illinois, Cook County, and the City of Chicago Census committees that focus on achieving a full count among hard to reach populations in the 2020 Census.

Help us spread the word about the importance of counting immigrant, refugee, and culturally diverse Illinois communities in the 2020 Census. Choose one of the following content options to share during the social media activation on **Monday, June 1, and post within the 12-1:30 pm CST window.**

Become a Census Champion

Bring thousands of dollars in federal funding and more political representation to your neighborhood. For every baby, child, and adult that you influence to fill out the Census, you're bringing thousands of dollars into their community for the next 10 years.

[Subscribe](#) for the latest updates and to get Notifications for Cook County Census Thunderclaps.

3 WAYS TO COMPLETE THE CENSUS

RESPOND ONLINE

Fill Out Your Census Online Today
my2020census.gov

RESPOND BY-MAIL

Return the Census packet you received in the mail.

RESPOND BY PHONE

Call **844-330-2020** or text your Census questions to **987987**